

[Letter from Carita Doggett Corse to Harold Spivacke, October 6, 1939]

Works Progress Administration of Florida

49 WEST DUVAL STREET JACKSONVILLE

Roy Schroder State Administrator

October 6, 1939

Dr. Harold Spivacke Chief, Division of Music Library of Congress Washington, D. C.

My dear Dr. Spivacke:

Thank you for your kind comment on my reports. Today I am forwarding a written report, —one original and two copies of the recordings at Cross City and Ybor City (Tampa). The records themselves were mailed sometime ago, but our clerical force has been so disorganized that we have been unable to forward this until now. I am herewith inclosing a long overdue report on the machine itself. This seems to have suffered from wear and lack of oil. After greasing the equipment, we found the tone still not satisfactory and requested a check-up from a radio and electric company who reported a short in the machine. Without my authority they remedied this and repaired the microphone cable, charging \$4.00. If this is not satisfactory to you, I will pay this myself. The music project is instructed not to assume responsibility for the equipment, and our project is without funds for this purpose.

Since RCA steel recording cutting needles seem to give better results than the sapphire needles, we are returning two of the sapphire needles with the request that you have these repaired and replace one lost by our operator, also charging this to me. Please let

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me know what this expense will be and I will forward check for same. I am retaining one sapphire needle until we complete the work. I regret that our efforts at recording have encountered so many unforeseen emergencies. Lack of funds for travel, lay-off of personnel due to 18 months ruling and confusion over instructions have made this a very difficult assignment. I hope that you will consider that the results were worth the effort.

While waiting for the shrimp fleets to assemble, we are recording Greek folksongs, songs of white truck drivers at the public market, and Negro songs at the Clyde Steamship docks, Jacksonville.

Sincerely yours, Carita Doggett Corse
Carita Doggett Corse State Supervisor, Statewide Writers' Project.

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Report on problems of operation of recording machine.

When the machine was unpacked one tube was found to be broken. This was replaced. It was discovered that the whole machine and especially the traveling arm needed greasing — this improved the quality of records after cause was located.

The steel cutting needles seemed to give clearer results than the sapphire needles, so these were used on the later records.

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The inside edge of the record seemed to be where sound recordings were least audible. Our operator reported that there should have been three small screws, rubber covered, to hold the record to the rubber mat. Only two screws arrived and they were no longer rubber covered.

When Mr. Morris arrives I will make a further report.